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THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN

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EDITORIAL BOARD: Axel Vopnfjord, Chairman of the Board and the Magazine Committee, 1267 Dominion St.; Miss M. Halldorson, Secretary, 213 Ruby St.; Judge W. J. Lindal, 788 Wolseley Ave.; Halldor J. Stefansson, 296 Baltimore Road; Jon K. Laxdal, 39 Home St.; Dr. Áskell Löve, 4-636 Gertrude Ave.; Dr. I. Gilbert Arna-
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NEWS EDITORS: Art Reykdal, 979 Ingersoll St.; Elman Guttormson, 82 Home St.
LEIF EIRIKSSON

CLUB: David Swainson, 471 Home St.

BUSINESS & CIRCULATION MANAGER

Hjalmar F. Danielson, 869 Garfield St.

Editorial and news correspondence should be addressed to the Chairman of the Board or to the Editor concerned; subscription and business correspondence to the Business and Circulation Manager.

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Representative in Iceland — Frú Ólaf Sigurðardóttir 26 C Vestrgötu Reykjavík.

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EDITORIALS

Skuli Johnson

Across the air waves flashed the announcement, "Skuli Johnson is dead". To thousands of listeners the message passed almost unnoticed, created scarcely a stir. But throughout the academic world and amongst the members of his racial group it aroused the awareness of a gaping void, a vacuum that could not be filled. Within the circle of his associates and acquaintances there descended in the Stygian darkness of the first shock a mutual feeling of lingering regret. For Skúli Johnson was an institution.

The immigrant's son was faced with seemingly insurmountable obstacles along the path over which he had chosen to run. He was nurtured amidst poverty in an environment where the accepted language of his country was not spoken, and in which the forces of ignorance and prejudice were still loathe to accept 'foreigners'. But to the sports-minded scholar these were but hurdles to be taken in stride and overcome by a spirit that would not accept defeat. Along that path glittering trophies of a race well run may now be viewed: victories on athletic fields; scholarships and gold medals in such subjects as Latin, Greek, Mathematics and English; and finally the most coveted of all prizes,

the Rhodes scholarship, won in 1909 for the first time by a student of Icelandic descent. His achievement was a potent factor in the break-down of racial prejudice, that sinister barrier to the progress of Canadianization.

Skúli Johnson's was not the traditional success story, the 'rags-to-riches' type, for he valued the treasures of the mind and spirit above material wealth. In a world that worships technological progress and the glitter and glamour of Hollywoodian productions, his virtues were not such as to win universal recognition or acclaim. He was the apostle of thoroughness. Sane living, sound scholarship, moderation in word and action, adherence to tried and proven principles, these were his obsessions. In an educational world which no longer accepts these principles in toto, he must at times have been haunted by a sense of frustration, but the word 'defeat' had never been included in his vocabulary.

Farewell, kindly scholar. We know that in some secluded Elysian field your questing spirit is still seeking knowledge with the same absence of display that were your characteristics during your sojourn on this earth.

Ave atque vale.

—A. V.



Icelandic Centenary In Utah

Just around the time that the **Ice-landic Canadian** goes to press, the descendants of the first Icelandic immigrants to the United States will be celebrating the hundredth anniversary of the coming of the first Icelanders to Spanish Fork, Utah, in the year 1855.

This was just eight years after the first vanguard of Mormon settlers had, fleeing from persecution in mid-western States, trekked across the barren desert, for over twelve hundred miles, to find a haven of refuge in what was then a desolate waste land. They called their new homeland Deseret, and it comprised all of Utah, and large sections of the adjoining territory.

We, who know something of the courage, fortitude, faith and dauntless endurance of the Icelandic pioneers in general, cannot help but feel a great upsurge of pride and a sense of achievement, as we picture the first three Icelanders who plodded across that burning desert, in 1855. True to their tradition, their descendants are today among outstanding leaders in enterprise and culture, in their communities.

That the Icelanders who came to Utah, were embraced into a brotherhood of kindred spirits cannot be doubted, for when we read the story of the brave people who conquered the desert and made it blossom like the rose, we realize that here was a people whose foresight, endurance, ideals and faith matched that of our own kinfolk who have given of their best in intelligence, skill and selflessness, so that future generations may reap richly the reward of their labours.

As with our own Icelandic pioneers, the uppermost thought in the minds of the first Latter Day Saints who came to Deseret was to build schools, and establish centres of religious worship. Not only did they build schools, but a mere three years after the first immigrants came in 1847, they had established a university. To be sure it was housed in a poor building and lacked almost all material necessities, but it was the answer to the high ideals of the settlers for it was a seat of higher learning, and around it they could build their varied cultural activities.

While they were busy building culturally, they worked at transforming the desert into flourishing cultivated land. The settlers in Deseret were the first in the United States to use irrigation for the cultivation of land. The fruits of their labours, physical as well as spiritual, are everywhere evident today in Utah, and further afield. And the Icelandic settlers, had a hand in all this glorious building of a western empire. But, few as they were, they kept faith with their own Icelandic traditions, and have to a remarkable extent kept up their ties with Icelandic culture, in spite of a hundred years of isolation from direct contact with Iceland or with other Icelandic settlements on this continent.

Anyone who has read of the elaborate plans that have been made for the Centenary celebration in Spanish Fork, June 15-17, will realize how closely the Utah Icelanders have kept in touch with their Icelandic heritage. It is further evident that, few as they are, they have the vision, courage and

generosity of spirit, to commemorate this important milestone in their history with fitting magnificence, and sparing no expense.

For Western Icelanders everywhere, this event in Spanish Fork is indeed of great significance, and we rejoice with the descendants of the Icelanders there on this historic occasion. We know that Icelanders everywhere will be with them in spirit during the three-day celebrations, and many hundreds of their kinsmen will be there to congratulate them and to wish them continued success in all their enterprises. Not only will the celebration be an

outstanding event in itself, it will serve to knit closer together all the Icelandic communities on this continent; and the effort being made by the Utah Icelanders to perpetuate their Icelandic heritage will perhaps serve as a stimulant to other communities to redouble their own efforts in the cultural field.

The **IceLANDIC CANADIAN** congratulates the Utah Icelanders on this happy occasion and wishes them success with the celebration and with all their interesting enterprises and endeavours.

Holmfridur Danielson



In The Editor's Confidence

THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN wishes to express to THE AMERICAN SCANDINAVIAN REVIEW its sincere appreciation for many past and present favors. This splendid publication has always shown a willingness to assist us by every means within its power. We hope that somehow we shall be able to reciprocate.

We extend greetings to our sister publication, FÉLAGSBLAÐIÐ, published by the Icelandic-American Association of Los Angeles. The sense of kinship we feel for each other is the direct result of the similarity of our aims.

FÉLAGSBLAÐIÐ is published in English, but the Icelandic connection is maintained by articles about Iceland and by headings in the Icelandic language, such as 'Ferðamenn' and

'Samtíningur'. Considerable space is devoted to news regarding the activities of the members of the Icelandic community in Los Angeles.

A great deal of credit is due to Mrs. G. M. Thorwaldson, the editor and business manager, for her efforts, which must take a great deal of her time.

In a letter published in the spring issue of this year the suggestion is made that there be published a translation by Dr. T. J. Oleson of the article **Romans in Iceland** from Kristján Eldjárn's GENGIÐ Á REKA. Unfortunately we cannot comply with this request, as this article has been translated and was published in a previous issue of THE AMERICAN SCANDINAVIAN REVIEW.

As our readers will recall, the first

of two articles by Dr. Richard Beck entitled "A Pilgrimage to Norseland" appeared in our spring issue. This article dealt with Dr. and Mrs. Beck's sojourn in Iceland. The second, dealing with their visit to Norway, was to have appeared in this issue, but, owing to the pressure of other duties Dr. Beck was unable to complete it in time. We are pleased to inform our readers, however, that they can look forward to its publication in September.

It is inevitable that the end of each year of publication bring in its wake changes in the Editorial Board and Magazine Committee. This, the thirteenth, is no exception. The pressure of business and other activities has unfortunately necessitated the resignation of two members of the Editorial Board. Mr. H. J. Stefansson, who has served for a number of years, will be greatly missed because of his frankness in expressing well-considered, sound opinions, his friendliness and unfailing good humor, and the work he has done in writing, proof-reading, and in other activities connected with the publication of the magazine.

In her quiet way Mrs. Helen Sigurdson has served as Secretary of the Board, and as our official reviewer of books. It has been our good fortune to profit by her appreciation of good literature and her sound knowledge of

the English language.

We thank Mr. Stefansson and Mrs. Sigurdson for their contributions. It is to be hoped that the time will come when they will be in a position to rejoin the Board.

In relinquishing the chairmanship of the Editorial Board and Magazine Committee, the writer wishes to express his appreciation to his associates and to others who have by their guidance and assistance enabled him to discharge his satisfying, but somewhat onerous duties.

It may now be confessed that, in view of the drive and industry of his capable predecessor, he undertook the task two years ago with some misgivings and considerable apprehension, but as a result of the co-operation accorded him by his fellow members of the Board and others, the initial reaction was soon considerably modified. It will be pleasant to continue the association in a subordinate capacity.

The incoming chairman, Judge W. J. Lindal, needs no introduction. He has been associated with the magazine since its inception, having previously served as chairman. He has its welfare at heart, and has given freely of his time and ability in its interests. His experience, enthusiasm, and capacity for hard work are auguries of an era of progress in the history of THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN. —A. V.





The Right Honorable Vincent Massey

Address of His Excellency *The Governor General of Canada* at Gimli, Man., May 21, 1955

Your Worship, Aldermen,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to be here today and I thank you sincerely for your very kind welcome. Somehow, Gimli and this region catches my imagination. Here, some eighty years ago, a small band of settlers arrived from Iceland. The story of their journey here and their early privations which included an epidemic of smallpox that killed over a third of the group, has all the drama and tragedy of those magnificent Icelandic sagas of a thousand years ago. The ingenuity and resourcefulness of the first settlers in establishing themselves, starting farms, organizing the fishing industry on Lake Winnipeg, shows the type of men and women they were.

I was most impressed to learn of some of the things which were given priority in this new community. As this area was then in unorganized territory, a constitution to fill local needs was adopted which provided for the election, by almost universal suffrage of those over eighteen years of age, of a reeve and councillors; for relief for the needy; arbitration of disputes with the right of appeal and the levying of taxes for local purposes. Schools were established and I understand that during the first winter three issues of a handwritten newspaper* were circulated and shortly afterwards the first newspaper started.

I am sure these are all things which

you know but I refer to them because they show that the founders of this community had a love of law and order, a profound respect for democratic institutions and a realization of the importance of education.

Since those days, the number of Icelanders in Canada has greatly increased and you have won a reputation for industry and enterprise of which your forebears could be justly proud. I am sure they would also be proud to know that you have not forgotten the Icelandic National Anthem, which was sung so beautifully a few minutes ago.

Since the turn of the century, groups from other lands have moved into this region and they too have made their contribution to the pattern of life in the area.

Those of you, whatever your racial origin, who have become Canadian citizens, must surely have been moved by the thought of assuming the privileges and responsibilities of being Canadian. On the other hand, I am sure that all thinking Canadians realize Canada's good fortune in having such people here to share in the bright future of this country. Canada owes a great debt to those early settlers who came to Canada. Their hard work, courage, ingenuity, combined with the faith, traditions and customs that they brought with them, have contributed tremendously to the devel-

opment of the country and we continue to reap the benefit through their children who are filling posts of importance and exerting their influence, not only here but across Canada. Each newcomer brings new ideas, new skills and traditions which cannot help but enrich the lives of all of us.

You in this region have become good Canadians in the fullest sense of the word. You have sent your sons to fight for Canada; you have entered into the enterprises and activities of this country. I sincerely hope that, although you have Canadian loyalties, you won't forget your origins and discard the traditions and culture of your ancestors. May the richness of

your heritage continue to be a part of your lives and an inspiration to us all.

* On October 21, 1875, about 250 Icelandic immigrants reached what came to be called Willow Point (Viðines) on the west shore of Lake Winnipeg. Two days later construction was started on the first house approximately three miles away, and it was called Gimli. That winter one of the immigrants, Jón Guðmundsson, started a local paper, wholly in his own handwriting. He called it "Nýr Þjóðlófur", Þjóðlófur being the name of a well known newspaper published in Iceland at that time. Three issues were published. In 1877 the settlers formed a company, bought a printing press, and began publishing "Framfari", "Progress", the first printed Icelandic paper in America. Reference: Guðlaugur Magnusson, O. S. Thorgeirsson Almanak, 1899. —Editor.

ADDRESS OF WELCOME

to His Excellency
 The Right Honorable
VINCENT MASSEY
 GOVERNOR GENERAL OF CANADA
 from
 Canada Press Club

Winnipeg, Canada, May 19, 1955

Your Excellency:

We welcome Your Excellency, the Governor General of Canada, to this gathering of members of the Canada Press Club and their ladies. Our pleasure is the greater as we recall that you are the first Canadian born representative of the Crown to occupy the highest office of state in Canada.

The Canada Press Club welcomes Your Excellency to the cosmopolitan City of Winnipeg where the Club came into existence almost fourteen years ago. At that time, when Your Excellency was at your post of duty in defence of the free nations of the world, the editors and publishers of the ethnic weeklies and periodicals in Winnipeg foregathered to study the way in which they could most effect-

ively apply themselves to the immediate task of contributing to the war effort, as well as to the continuing, though less exacting task of building in Canada a nation strong and free. The Club seeks to interpret the Canadian scene and foster unity, based upon bonds of freedom and Christian principles, within a variety which is bound to obtain in a nation composed of many national elements.

Events following the war have clearly demonstrated, in a way that could not have been foreseen, how essential it is that the resolve of the Canadian people to guard those fundamentals of our way of life be not relaxed. Both upon humanitarian grounds and upon sound principles

of nation building in a land of wide expanse, Canada has very properly accepted a large flow of immigrants. This policy has given rise to duties of welcome to our immigrants, followed by appropriate integrating processes. Members of the Canada Press Club feel that by reason of their training as well as their varied ethnic origins, they are especially well equipped to assist in the discharge of these new duties that have fallen upon the Canadian people. To these ends members of the Club have bent their efforts in the past and for these purposes they seek to serve in the future.

The Canada Press Club rejoices that by your attendance this afternoon, Your Excellency has made known your appreciation of the work that the ethnic weeklies and other periodicals are endeavoring to do both in reaching out to groups who are already Canadians by birth or certificates of citizenship and to others who soon will become Canadian citizens. A more encouraging gesture could not have been made by Canada's first citizen; a more gracious act could not have been made by the highest representative in Canada of Her Majesty the Queen.

We welcome Your Excellency, not only as the representative of Her Majesty, but also as an outstanding Canadian who has clearly seen the need, even in these turbulent times, of placing due emphasis upon the finer sides of Canadian citizenship. The Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, is a guide of in-

estimable value to the builders of Canada as well as a monument to your wisdom and unabating zeal.

We welcome Your Excellency as a man of letters; a scholar, whose Alma Mater is a Canadian University, Toronto, of which you are now Chancellor; a Canadian, who holds a Master of Arts degree from that renowned seat of learning, Oxford. We have derived encouragement in noting how continuously in your utterances on the platform and in permanent record you have impressed upon the people of Canada the value of a study of the humanities as part of the cultural equipment of the citizen who seeks to give of his best.

The Scottish educator, Gilbert Highet, Anthon Professor of Latin Language and Literature at Columbia University, reminds his readers that "every human brain is filled with unused power" and points to the teacher who ever seeks to stimulate something within the student which, "mysterious as all vital processes", will cause the energies of his mind "to combine into a new, living, active, creative synthesis".

In this kindly and most gracious visit to the Canada Press Club, Your Excellency may well have stimulated its members to draw upon their unused powers and reach heights of service not attained before.

Your Excellency! We thank you sincerely for receiving us this afternoon. May God give you strength to continue many years of noble service to Canada and her people.

FRONT COVER POEM

B R I M

eftir Einar Pál Jónsson



Við sandana brimið brotnar,
það ber með sér upp á land
öll feiknin af gömlum flökum,
er fortíðin sigldi í strand.

Þó feyskið sé margt eitt flakið
og fljótaskriftin máð,
er eithvað á öllum stöðum
úr aldarháttum skráð.

Og brimlöðrið nesin nístir;
það nær upp í miðja hlið.
Í fangi þess á hver alda
sitt upphaf og dauðastrið.

Til brimrótsins svipar sögu —
frá sökkvabekk lýsir enn, —
hún sæmir oss ótal erfðum
um afrek og dána menn.

Við hættunnar helgidóma —
Um hamstolta Drafnar sund
tendrar sér árdags elda
hin útskygna farmanns lund.

Hver sál sem er íslenzks eðlis,
kýs ólgandi manndráps höf.
Því lífið er líkast brimi
og lognið þess hefndargjöf.

B R E A K E R S

Einar Pál Jónsson

Translated by Paul Bjarnason

The seas on the bars are beating
About, on the sand dunes, lie
The flanks of the fated vessels
That foundered in years gone by.

Though most of the rafts are riven
And the writing is worn and old,
Man's tortuous road to reason
The wrecks on the beach unfold.

The surf by the capes is crowding.
It creeps on the rising lith
And hugs to its breast each billow
That broke on the scarry frith.

The breakers resemble Saga.
They sweep to the fore again
A coastful of ancient cargoes
And corpses of long-dead men.

Yet out to the tameless ocean
The eyes of the fearless turn,
To vision afar, in fancy,
The fringe of a new day burn.

—A soul from the source eternal
Must seek where the storms are rife.
We rot in the dreamy doldrums;
To dare is the food of life.

From ODES AND ECHOES,
by Paul Bjarnason, by the kind permission of the author.

INSTRUCTIVE TRANSLATIONS

by DR. STEFÁN EINARSSON

I.

If memory serves me, there was published, several years ago, in this periodical an article comparing the poetic diction and prosodic habits of Icelandic and English. Also, if I remember correctly, the author came to the conclusion that the two were so different that there was not much hope that Icelandic poetry could ever be transmitted by translation into the English language. He probably also felt that alliteration—a sine qua non of Icelandic verse—was too difficult a feat* for the English translator to imitate or, if imitated, would not be noticed by the English reader. There is, of course, a great deal to be said for this point of view. One may claim that the proof of the pudding is the fact that translators—even the best like Jakobina Johnson—have either avoided or entirely eliminated the alliterative pattern in their translations from Icel. poetry. In fact, attempts to preserve the alliteration have, as far as I know, mostly been made by scholars in translating the Old Icelandic poetry of the *Eddas* and the skalds into English. In America the chief practitioner of this difficult and thankless art has been Professor Lee M. Hollander, who has not only translated all the easy Eddic poems, but also a good deal of the extremely difficult skaldic poetry. He has also written an illuminating book on the skalds and their art. Few Icelanders have ever tried to give metrical

translations of the Eddic and skaldic poetry in modern languages. I can recall only the translations by Eiríkr Magnússon. He had intended to do them in collaboration with his life-long friend, the poet William Morris, but Morris died before the plan could be realized. The fact is that it is much easier to turn any language into one's mother tongue than vice versa, not to speak of trying to turn one foreign language into another one, but that is just what the foolhardy Eiríkr Magnússon did when he translated the Swedish *King Fialar* into English verse. No doubt the translation left something to be desired: it was neither acclaimed by critics nor did it become a best seller. Today it is probably just as dusty as Eiríkr Magnússon's worst translation: The Icelandic one of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*.

The above remarks should already have convinced one that the path of the Icelandic translators has been more productive of thorns than roses. Yet these lines would not have been written but for the fact that another bilingual Icelander, the Canadian Paul Bjarnason, has entered the lists with another volume of poems, *Odes and Echoes* (Vancouver, 1954) of which the Echoes are English translations from the Icelandic. He has no illusions about the difficulties of his task:

"The English language is an excellent medium of expression both in public and private life and serves well in all classes of prose literature. But it definitely has its shortcomings in the field of poetry, and most acutely so when it comes to interpreting the strict and intricate style of Icelandic

* Poets or readers accustomed to endrime invariably think alliteration harder than endrime. The contrary, however, is capable of mathematical proof. But the Icelandic prosody combining both has, of course, the difficulties of both.

verse. It is therefore with a great deal of trepidation that I submit these examples to the random reader. In some cases I have adhered strictly to the Icelandic form, in regard to both alliteration and the rhyming; but for the most part I have compromised to a degree, in deference to idiom and clarity."

One cannot judge the translator too harshly if some of the poetical perfume of the original evaporates in the process. He is fully conscious of it himself and, like President Eisenhower with Formosa, he is taking a calculated risk. But fortunately, unlike General Eisenhower, the translator need have no fear that the world will go up in smoke if his attempt misfires. Icelandic poetry has two things: a spiritual soul and a rhetorical body. Previous translators have usually given up the body in order to save the soul, though only the best have succeeded. This translator aims to transpose Icelandic poetry body and soul into the English language, but I feel that, even if he succeeded only in saving the rhetorical body, his work would not have been in vain. He is thereby performing for his Canadian-Icelandic countrymen the same service which Snorri Sturluson performed with his justly famed textbook of poetry, the *Edda*. This noble didactic tradition was kept up by the authors of Keys of metrics (*háttalyklar*) down through the centuries, the last of the series being Sveinbjörn Benteinsson, *Bragfræði og Háttatal* (Reykjavík, 1953).

II.

Poetical traditions are peculiarly tyrannical habits of mind. Paul Bjarnason masters two, or is mastered by two: the Icelandic, characterized by alliteration, rime, inrime, and assonance (his: near-rhyme) and the English,

marked by rime or endrime only. Here we disregard other conventions of the poetic style: the ornate Icelandic diction with roots in the skaldic kennings, the English demands for a comparatively natural word order; two features of many differentiating the poetics of these sister languages.

Yet one can see that Paul Bjarnason is not mastered by the new tendencies in English poetry, nor would he approve the experiments of the Modern Icelandic Atomic poets, whose free verse and conceited style owes much to the example of the English school of Hopkins, Eliot, and Pound. It is, of course, true in a sense that this tendency of free verse "altogether independent of form and style and melody" as Paul Bjarnason describes it, is a threat not only to the nineteenth century English poetic style but even more so to the ornate and intricate style of Icelandic poetry. One might then perhaps not a priori think that the present would be an auspicious time to introduce the intricate Icelandic style to an English speaking world which already has revolted against much easier rules.

Nevertheless, the revolt among the English poets makes for experimentation, and if poets and readers are willing to experiment they will be more apt to listen with an indulgent ear to peculiar foreign strains. This is not mere theorizing, for I have found that students of Hopkin's sprung rhythm have been most liable to perk up their ears when exposed to the Old Germanic—or Icelandic—alliterative line as it is realized in Old and Middle English poetry. Hence I feel certain that these times of revolt and experimentation are much more opportune for the reception of Icelandic forms than the period ending with World War I.

III.

Let us revert to our statement: Poetical traditions are peculiarly tyrannical habits of mind. Still there may come times, when one tradition is replaced by another one or superimposed upon another one. The first happened in the English language, the second case in Icelandic. A review of the English tradition from about 700 A.D. up to date is very instructive in this respect.

Shortly before 700 the Northumbrian illiterate poet, Cædmon, composed the first poem in honor of God the Creator:

Nu we sculon herian
heofonrices Weard,
Meotodes meahte
and his modgeþank;

weorc Wuoldorfæder,
hu hewundra gehwæs,
ece Drihten,
or onstealde.

Cædmon did not devise this poetical form. His ancestors had, no doubt, brought it over from their ancient homes in Southern Jutland and Northwest Germany when they invaded England in 449. The lines on the Golden Horn of Gallehus in Southern Jutland dating from ca. 300 were composed in the same form:

Ek Hlewagastiz Holtingaz
horna tawido.

and so were the Icelandic poems of the *Edda* no doubt partly imported by the Norwegians, when they settled in Iceland 874, though they were not written down until the 13th century in Iceland. Fortunately, these poems did not join the monotonous praise of the Christian God like Cædmon. In-

stead they told stories of the Old Heathen Gods themselves:

Hljóðs bið ek allar
helgar kindir,
meiri ok minni
mögu Heimdallar.

villtu, at ek, Valföðr
vel fram telja
forn spjöll fira
þau er fremst um man.

But the form was the same in all these poems, the so-called Old Germanic alliterative line or couplet: with two short lines tied to a couplet with alliteration (marked in the examples above). There were two stressed syllables in each short line: the first (odd) line might contain one or two alliterations, falling on one or the other of the stressed syllables. The second (even) line must have alliteration, falling on its first stressed syllable. Snorri Sturluson called the alliteration of the even (second) line *höfuðstafr* (head-stave) but the one or two of the odd (first) line *stuðlar* (props, staffs).

The alliteration was a kind of initial rime, each consonant alliterating only with itself, except for the groups *sp*, *st*, *sk*, which could not alliterate with small fat *s*. alone but only with themselves, *sp* with *sp*, *st* with *st*, etc. Vowels also alliterate, any vowel with any other vowel. To a modern person used to the English rime this system of alliteration may sound or look formidable, actually it was considerably easier than the modern rime. And here is a curious illustration of the formidable tenacity of poetical habits:

The alliterative line was used in Old English poetry with such tenacity from 700–1100, that if the lines of Cædmon's hymn, already quoted, were the only ones preserved from this period, we could still get almost as good

an idea of the poetical form of the period as we can from the actually preserved poems from the period, published in six thick volumes. Rime (end-rime) was practically unknown in all this body of poetry, but during the twelfth century it began to appear in the ballad stanza (probably after French models) and elsewhere (in imitation of the Latin hymns, which by 1200 were almost anywhere rimed). Yet alliteration did not die in English poetry. There is a poem from about 1200 called Lawman's **Brut**, where the Old English alliterative line (or couplet) sometimes survives intact, sometimes has endrime of the short lines superimposed on the alliteration, sometimes it has only endrime, no alliteration. Finally, during the fourteenth century, in Chaucer's days, there were excellent poets, like the authors of **Gawain and the Green Knight** and **Piers Plowman**, who used no rime but only alliteration, and more of it than ever was used in Old English or Icelandic, for Icelandic always strictly adhered to the Old Germanic rule of two or at most three alliterations for the alliterative couplet. This is also obvious in Paul Bjarnason's poems. But as an example of alliteration in Chaucer's time in England, these lines from **Gawain** will suffice:

And ay þe lorde of the londe
is lent on his gammes
To hunt in holtes and heþe
at hyndes barayne;
Such a sowme he þer slowe
by þat þe sunne heldet,
Of dos and of oper dere,
to deme were wonder.

But this was the last burst of alliteration in English poetry. Since Chaucer's day, in his French tradition, rime has been the sole ruler in English

poetry. That is, if we disregard blank verse and the modern experiments in free verse.

IV.

I said above that rime was practically unknown in Old English poetry, as far as it has been preserved to us. Yet it actually does occur twice (in two poems) superimposed upon the Old Germanic alliterative scheme. This happens in a few lines in a poem (**Elene**) by Cynewulf (fl. 800) and in a so-called **Riming Poem**, probably from a similar date, if not later. Whence did these two poems have their rime? From Irish-Latin hymns, seemingly, for there is a Latin rhythmus of such an origin, which runs:

Sancte sator
suffragator
Legum lator
Iargus dator, —etc

The Irish had begun to use rime in their Latin hymns as early as 700 or before; by 800 they were experienced rimers. This rhythmus, however, is exceptional in that it combines rime and alliteration according to the Germanic scheme. The Irish also used alliteration both in their native poetry and in their Latin hymns, but not according to the Germanic scheme, as far as we can see, except in this rhythmus. So one may wonder whether the rhythmus is not, perhaps, the work of an Englishman who used his Germanic alliteration, as Icelandic parsons of the 17th century used their customary alliteration, when they translated the terrific **vikivaki Tröllaslagur** into Latin.

However this may be, there can be no doubt about it that Egill Skallagrímsson, when he came to England and had to compose **Höfuðlausn** to ransom his head at the hands of Eiríkr blóðöxi at York, was imitating forms

which he had himself heard in England, and no doubt in Old English rather than in Latin.

Rauð hilmir hjör,
þar var hrafna gjör,
fleinn sótti fjör,
flugu dreyrug spjör;

ól flagðs gota
fárþjóðr Skota,
trað nipt Nara
náttverð ara.

With this poem, Egill introduced rime into Icelandic poetry superimposed on the alliterative scheme. It has remained so ever since in Icelandic poetry, if rime was used at all. And it was true not only of the Old Icelandic meters using rime: rimed *fornyrðislag* (=runtent, the above meter), rimed *dróttkvætt*, and rimed *hrynhent*—but also for the new meters introduced during the fifteenth century in the sacred poetry, of which *Ljómur* is the most typical example.

V.

We shall now proceed to give examples of Icelandic meters in English translations, as far as possible from Paul Bjarnason's *Odes and Echoes*. But since he has no example of the Eddic *fornyrðislag*, we borrow that from Hollander's translation of *The Poetic Edda*:

Völuspá 1.

Hear me, all ye
hallowed beings,
both high and low
of Heimdall's children:
thou wilt, Valfather,
that I well set forth
the foremost fates
of which befall the Earth.

Next comes an instance of *dróttkvætt* (court meter) by Sighvatr Þórðarson translated by Hollander:

Readily will Look the **L**adies
and Lasses, as we are passing
by the **R**oad, on the dust of our **R**iding
fast, up to Rögnvald's castle.
Let us SPur to SPEed our horses
SPrightly, so that the maidens highborn
and fair from the Hall may Hear us
WHisk by as we gallop briskly.

Here the alliteration is marked by capitals, the inrimes (and half-rimes) by bold face. This same meter is used by Stephan G. Stephansson and Paul Bjarnason in "Northern Lights":

Gleaming through the Gloaming,
Geysers, wild, arising,
Tip the rock with Tapers,
Twos and more afusing.
Lambent rays iLLumine
Living bows aquiver.

Of old this stanza should be of eight lines (two four-line halves) but Stephan G. Stephansson plays with the meter. Of old, too, the inrimes were arranged so, that there was to be full-rime in the even lines, half-rimes or assonances in the odd lines (full-rime living: quiver, half-rime gleam:gloam). But neither Stephan G. Stephansson nor Paul Bjarnason follow the rule fully.

While one or two alliterations in the odd lines of *fornyrðislag* are optional, two alliterations in this position are a must in *dróttkvætt*. In both meters the alliteration must fall on the first stressed syllable of the even lines (*höfuðstafur* =head stave). The one or two alliterative words (*stuðlar*) of the odd lines must also be stressed.

Another old meter, called *hrynhent* (or *Liljulag*) is used by Matthías Jochumsson in his "Íslenzk tunga" (dedicated to American-Icelanders):

Sé eg hendur Manna Mynda
 Meginþráð yfir höfin bráðu,
 þann er Lönd og Lýði bindur
 Lifandi orði suður og norður.
 Meira tákni og Miklu stærra
 Meginband hefur guðinn dregið
 Sveiflað og fest með Sólar afli
 Sálu fyllt og guðamáli.

This was in all probability first patterned on a church hymn meter; it first occurs in "Hafgerðingadrápa" composed by a man from the Hebrides. It was elevated to the brilliance of court poetry by Arnór Þórðarson jarlaskáld in his "Hrynhenda" in honor of Magnús góði and, finally, etherialized in stateliness again as sacred poetry by Eysteinn Ásgrímsson in his "Lilja", whence the meter was called *Liljulag*.

Paul Bjarnason has not quite succeeded in turning this meter into English: he has chopped a syllable off the even lines, as this example of the first stanza, quoted in the original above, will show:

Strung beneath the Oceans Anger
 Are the ties that man devised;
 That in Lands so Long estranged
 Link the minds of humankind.
 Yet a mightier Tie and Token,
 Tended by the gods, may send
 Through our Souls and deeper Solace,
 Sung in our own mothertongue.

Rules of alliteration and inrimes are here the same as in *dróttkvætt*.

Next in age to the Eddic and skaldic meters are the meters used in composing *rímur* (*rímnahættir*). They seem to be derived from ballad-stanzas of four, three or two lines (quatrains, triplets (?), couplets (?)). In Iceland they first appear in the first quarter of the thirteenth century.

Oldest of them is *ferskeytt* (a qua-

train) exemplified by one verse of Káinn's:

Meistari Elis á nú bágí
 öllum vel að þjóna,
 "Go to hell!" en hafðu lágt,
 hann er að "telefóna."

Worthy Elis all unstrung
 in his cell is groaning:
 Go to hell and hold your tongue,
 he is telephoning.

Two more quatrains on the same page of Paul Bjarnason are in the meter called *úrkast*. I give one as an example:

Þegar fátt eg fémætt hef
 í fórum mínum,
 úr sálarfylgsnum gull eg gref
 og gef það svínum.

With other riches running low,
 I wring a measure
 From out my secret soul—and throw
 To swine the treasure.

In the next example, Paul Bjarnason has changed the original meter of Káinn's *stikluvík* to *samhent*, if all the lines are meant to rime.

Oftast, þegar enginn sér
 og enginn maður heyrir,
 en brennivínið búið er,
 bið eg guð að hjálpa mér

I must confess that frequently,
 With few or none to hear and see,
 And empties scattered all agley,
 I ask my God to succor me.

I have not found the technical name for the last quatrain on Paul Bjarnason's page, but it is correctly translated from the original:

Eg hlýt að slá við slöku
 í slyngri ljóðamennt.
 Pað yrkir enginn stöku
 á aðeins 2%.

Too much the muse exacted
From me so ill-content.
No inspiration acted
On only "two per cent".

The quatrain of Stephan G. Stephansson's "Eloi lamma sabakhthani" is called **samhent**, the rime being aabb.

Svolítil frétt var fæðing hans
í fjárhúsjötu hirðingjans,
að dag og ártal enginn reit,
um aldur hans ei nokkur veit

No horns were blown nor havoc made
When **He** was in the manger laid.
No diary the date has shown;
His day of birth is still unknown.

I am not certain, whether "Like a Child" by J. M. Bjarnason is *valstýfi* or *dverghent*:

Neither am I certain whether "The Tear" by Kristján Jónsson is stefjahrun or not:

Þú sæla heimsins svalalind,
ó, silfurskæra tár,
er allri svalar ýta-kind
og ótal læknar sár.

O blessed fount of bittersweet!
Thou burning silvery tear,
That healest in each heart that beats
The hurts of yesteryear.

These are all quatrains, but Paul Bjarnason has also translated a triplet by Káinn, the meter of which is called stuðlafall:

Ef einhver sér mig ekki vera að moka,
þetta orða þannig hlýt: —
þá er orðið hart um skít.

Should I be caught without a fork or
shovel, —
He who notes my normal cares
Will know that dung is getting scarce.

The ballad-quatrains and the rest of the **rimur** meters were originally simple forms, and remain so in the examples here quoted from Paul Bjarnarson, though they always must have both alliteration and rime (end-rime).

But often they were adorned not only by the intricate in-rimes of skaldic poetry (and medieval Latin hymns), but also by the ornate, often downright baroque, diction of skaldic poetry, the chief feature of which was the so-called kenning, a metaphor which seldom allowed the poets to call a spade a spade.

Both these trends in oramentation, ultimately derived from the skalds, are especially strong in Paul Bjarnason's favorite poets: Stephan G. Stephansson and Einar Benediktsson, about half of all the translations are from these giants of modern Icelandic poetry.

Looking at these selections from Stephan G. Stephansson, we find none more intricate in form than his imitative *dróttkvætt* of "Northern Lights", (*Gleaming through the gloaming*), already quoted and discussed. But otherwise to give an example of Stephan's style, "Lone Peak" ("*Fjallið Einbúið*") is not a bad example:

Hann Einbúi gnaefir svo langt yfir lágt,
að lyngtætlur stara á hann hissa
og kjarrviðinn sundlar að klifra svo
hátt

og klettablóm táfestu missa.
 Þó kalt hljóti nepjan að næða hans
 tind
 svo nakinn, hann hopar þó hvergi.
 Hann stendur sem hreystinnar heilaga
 mynd
 og hreinskilnin, klöppuð úr bergi.

Lone Peak rears his bust to the beautiful sky,
 And the bulrushes gaze on astounded.
 The copsewood refuses to clamber so high
 And the creepers lose footing around it.
 And though the cold blasts ever beat
 without ruth
 On the brow, in the strife he engages,
 Unconquered he stands, as if courage
 and truth
 Were carved from the rock of the ages.

Apart from the style, which I feel the translator has rendered faithfully in this case, this is highly characteristic of Stephan's thought and attitudes, in fact it is doubtful, whether a better *epitaphium auctoris* could be devised than this short poem.

But at no time did Stephan rise with more adamant fierceness against the currents of his time than during World War I. He spoke his mind in *Vígslóði*, which however did not come out until after the war (1920). Paul Bjarnason translated several of these poems, among them the long and weighty "Armistice," for which poem alone the Canadians might have tried the old poet for treason, had there been such a translation of it at the time.

But there are more poems on other subjects than the hateful war, thus the famed "Brothers' Destiny" containing the winged dictum:

To think not in hours but in ages
 At eve not to claim all our wages,
 Will bring out the best in the race.

Of selections from Einar Benediktsson's poems, the one most closely related to the ornate skaldic verse is the beginning of "Rev. Oddur's Disappearance" (*Hvarf síra Odds á Miklabæ*), probably the most artistically told ghost story in the Icelandic language, at least in verse:

Hleypir skeiði hörðu
 halur yfir ísa,
 glymja járn við jörðu
 jakar í spori rísa.
 Hátt slær nösum hvæstum
 hestur í veðri geystu.
 Gjósta af hjalla hæstum
 hvín í faxi reistu.

Recklessly a rider
 Races o'er the ice.
 Under shoes resounding
 Sag the floes and rise.
 The charger sniffs and snorting
 Snuggles to the rein.
 Briskly mountain breezes
 Brush the flowing mane.

It will be seen that the translation has alternate feminine and masculine rimes—while the original has only feminine rimes. The same thing happened in the translation of Matthías Jochumsson's poem above (*Tunganeymir í tímans straumi*). There is, of course, a good reason for this remissness of the translator: the comparative scarcity of disyllabic words in English as compared to Icelandic.

To give another example of Einar Benediktsson's stately lines the first stanza of "Northern Lights" may be here quoted:

Veit duftsins son nokkra dýrðlegri sýn
 en drotnanna hásal í vafurloga?
 Sjá grundu og vog undir gullhelfdum
 boga! —
 Hver getur nú unað við spil og vín?

sjá moldin er hrein eins og mær við lín,
mókar í haustsins visnu rósum.
Hvert sandkorn í loftsins litum skín
og lækirnir kyssast í silfurósum.
Við úthafsins skaut er allt eldur og
skraut
af iðandi norðurljósum.

Has man ever gazed on grander sight
Than the god's high realm in a blaze
of glory,
Resplendent with torches in tier and
storey?
What toper could revel on such a
night?
Like a maiden the earth is without a
blight
In its alban kirtle of frosted roses.
Each granule of sand is a cinder,
bright.
Ensilvered the winding brooklet dozes.
The Arctic at night is alustre with
light
That the living aurora imposes,

Besides these the translator has a roster of great poems by Einar Benediktsson: "My Mother," "Under the Stars," "A Sunday at Mosfell," "Thule," "The Swan," "The Thames," "The Pawnshop," and the revealing autobiographical "Starkaðs Soliloquy."

An English-speaking person of native or Icelandic descent could not be sent anywhere but to Paul Bjarnason's volume to get an idea of the two great Icelandic poets Stephan G. Stephanson and Einar Benediktsson.

Paul Bjarnason's fastidious taste comes out in his selection of great poems not only by Stephan and Einar, as already shown, but by many other

poets. Thus we find the Icelandic funeral dirge by Hallgrímur Pétursson, "The Road" by Þorsteinn Erlingsson, "Sandy Bar" by Guttormur J. Guttormsson, "The Parson's Confession" by Davíð Stefánsson, "The Librarian" by Jón Helgason, as well as the "Millennial Hymn" by Matthías Jochumsson.

These great poems may have lost something, even much, in the translation (my favorite "Í Árnasafni" has!) but they remain the best available introductions to the originals for the time being—until another and better Canadian-Icelandic poet translates them into English, keeping the Icelandic form. For that he could do no better than to pay a close attention to Paul Bjarnason's instructive translations.

BOOKS USED:

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Austin, Texas, 1928.

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Karl Shapiro, *A Bibliography of Modern Prosody*, Baltimore, 1948.

G. B. Krapp and E. v. K. Dobbie, *The Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records*. New York I.—VI, 1931—1953.

J. R. Tolkien & E. V. Gordon, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. Oxford, 1936.

Toronto Club Studies Icelandic Literature

Ever since we organized the Icelandic Canadian Evening School in 1944, it has been our personal privilege and pleasure to be of assistance to individuals and clubs in various parts of this continent, who wished to enhance their knowledge about Iceland and the Icelandic history, literature and language.

A sort of private correspondence school has been operating for the last ten years, with various types of material on Icelandic history and culture going out to these groups of interested persons. This has included books and pamphlets, maps, dictionaries, typewritten addresses, and hundreds of copies of the language lessons that were prepared for the Evening school originally. We have also been able to aid teachers with recordings, poetry samples and translations for use in classroom work, and school broadcasts. Students have received a large variety of material, and many of these in various parts of Canada and the United States have written theses on Icelandic matters, or on the Icelandic settlements in America. Requests have come for material and language lessons from as far away as Hawaii.

It was of great interest to us to hear about a Literary Club in Toronto, composed of non-Icelandic women, who wished to take on the study of Icelandic literature as a project for last season. When Mrs. Marjorie Blackadar, a member of this Toronto Club, known as the Monday Club, contacted us for material on Iceland we were delighted to send her a variety of mimeographed and typewritten material on hand, as well as such

advice we could give, along with lists of books on Iceland published in the English language. Later we asked Mrs. Blackadar to tell us a little about their interesting project.

The following are a few excerpts from her letter.

"Mrs. Young and I belong to a Literary Club, a study group, known as the Monday Club. It was organized in 1913 by a group of young women with a keen appreciation for literature, and the avowed purpose of each member to undertake a bit of research each season and of sharing it with fellow members. . . . It is an interesting group, as we have as members artists, musicians, teachers, craftsmen, and writers, and we meet twice a month for study and discussions from October to April each year. . . . Some of us have been members for twenty-five years or more.

"You will appreciate that in this length of time a great many subjects have engaged the attention of the members. We have had papers on Scandinavian literature, mythology, and on the literature of New Canadians, all of which have touched on Icelandic literature.

"However, so far as I could find out, the Club had never made a study of Icelandic literature as such. I made two abortive efforts to include it on the programme—while doing some reading myself and becoming more interested all the time. Last year our programme was "elective", an innovation for us, and Mrs. Young and I decided our papers would be by way of an INTRODUCTION to Icelandic culture.

"If you think our little effort is sufficiently important to interest your readers, we would of course be honoured to have it brought to their attention in the **Icelandic Canadian**.

"Our papers were well received and created a lively interest, moreover we responded to a request for a sort of command performance by another group to which we belong. They, also were very enthusiastic, and one of them we discovered has a cousin who wrote her college thesis in Icelandic.

"I think the reason the Club had hitherto hesitated to undertake a study of Icelandic literature, has been because of the idea that resource material, translations etc., are so hard to come by. Where do we start, we asked ourselves, and how do we organize such a study?

"Well, I went to the reference library and found the subject much vaster than I had realized. . . . and then I came upon the book, **Iceland's Thousand Years**. That of course was the answer to our problem and I used it extensively. I sent to you for a couple of extra copies and for copies of the Icelandic Canadian, and was most happy to receive these and the other material you sent me.

"My own little library includes Dr. Pilcher's **Icelandic Christian Classics**, and his **Meditations on the Passion**. The **Story of Burnt Njal**, and the **Grettir Saga**; Modern Sagas, (Walters) and many of Mrs. Salverson's books. From the library we had: **Icelandic Sagas** (Craigie) **North American Book of Icelandic Verse** (Kirkconnell) **Canadian Overtones** (same author) **History of Iceland** (Gjerset); **Independent People** (Laxness) **New World Outpost** (Rothery) and **Land of the Loon** (Yeats). More recently we came by the books, **Iceland New-Old Republic** (Amy Jensen) and **Iceland and the Ice-**

landers, by Helgi P. Briem. We also had all the articles you listed in the Geographics. In our bibliography we also included eight or ten of the Cornell Press publications on Iceland, and Dr Einarsson's Grammar.

"My interest in Icelandic literature had been keen for a long time and in addition my curiosity was piqued by the conflicting opinions prevalent when the Canadian troops were in Iceland. Later my nephew, Dr. A. K. Blackadar, (New York University Faculty) was stationed in Iceland for two years and was most enthusiastic. At that time he was a young Captain in the U.S. Airforce in the Meteorological Branch. I have another link with the great Northland, Dr. Robert Blackadar, a Canadian, (University of Toronto) is a geologist attached to the Federal Government's Arctic Exploration Division. He spends his summers in the Arctic. Year before last he and another lad were on Ellesmere Island and located one of Peary's caches, and a bit of the American flag, etc."

Mrs. Blackadar in her letter describes more in detail this splendid cultural project of Icelandic studies, undertaken by a group of non-Icelandic enthusiasts. This outstanding effort as well as some others that have been mentioned in the Icelandic Canadian, notably the project undertaken by Miss Marion Henderson, a school teacher at Iroquois Falls, Ont. (See Icel. Can. Vol. 7, No. 3) should bring home to us who are of Icelandic origin, how much we could do, and what a joy it could be, to spend some time and effort individually or in groups, to really acquaint ourselves with our Icelandic History and literature, past and present, and to make an effort to study the language, as well.

We have always held the view that

learning about our own background and delving into the intriguing past of our Icelandic heritage should never be looked upon as a **chore or duty**, but rather as a delightful adventure of the mind and the spirit. And who is it among us that is not willing to sacrifice a few moments of his leisure time to improve his mind, to enhance his knowledge, to broaden his vision? Not one, surely, so we feel that in our surge towards more knowledge, more understanding, more joy in creative living we should indeed, wish to devote some time to the study of our own ancestry.

That is why we consider that it has, for the last ten years, been a rewarding task to aid in every way, all those who have come to us for help in their study of Icelandic history, literature and language, whether they have been of Icelandic origin or not. And we think that the readers of the Icelandic Canadian cannot help but feel a thrill when they read about such efforts as this one by the Monday Club of Toronto. It will be a spur to their own enthusiasm and efforts in this sphere of study.

Holmfridur Danielson

Gala Occasion

The Hans Ortner residence on Halldane Avenue in Whittier was the scene of a very pleasant gathering Sunday afternoon, April 24. The occasion was manifold. In the first place, the Ortners had been married forty years on the third of February. In the second place they had recently moved into this beautiful area in Whittier, so it was a sort of housewarming too. Another event is that Mr. Ortner will celebrate his 75th birthday late in May. As a climax to all this, the Ortners are planning a trip to Iceland and Germany this summer.

Friends arrived from San Diego to La Canada to pay homage to this couple who have never considered time nor money too great a sacrifice if someone needed assistance in some manner. Their many deeds of kindness have earned the deep esteem that prompted their many friends to gather at their home to express their deep appreciation. A delicious lunch was served by the self-invited guests, followed by a program consisting of

community singing, and an original poem written for the occasion by Mr. Ed Scheving of San Diego. The Ortners were presented with a gift from the group. They responded with well-chosen words.

From "Félagsblaðið," Los Angeles



Jón Kristgeirson, an instructor in the elementary schools in Iceland, spent a year in this country studying the methods used here in our public schools. He spent nearly a week in the city as a guest of the Nils Lansings. —"Félagsblaðið", Los Angeles



We have heard of a few in this area who are making plans for visiting Iceland this summer. Mrs. Sumi Swanson left New York on April 6th. Cards received by several of her friends around the end of April were postmarked in Paris. Needless to say, she is having a glorious trip. Mr. Swanson will meet her in Iceland about the beginning of July. —"Félagsblaðið", Los Angeles

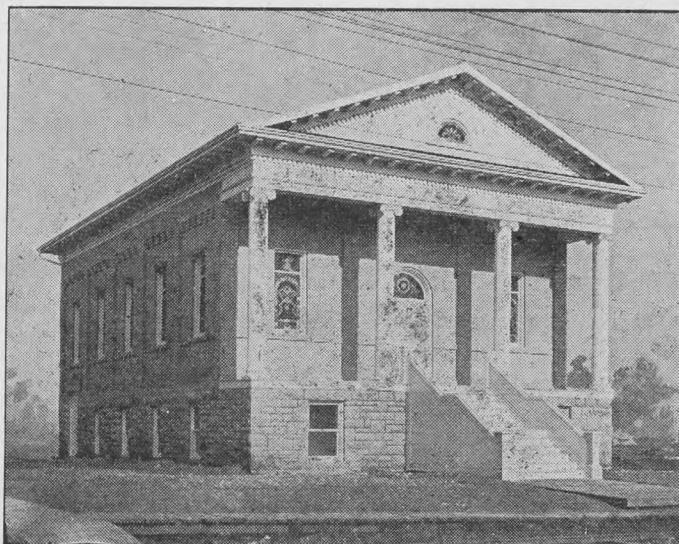
Ladies' Aid of the First Federated Church of Winnipeg Marks 50th Anniversary

On February 1st, '54, the Ladies' Aid Society of the First Federated Church of Winnipeg celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of continuous service to their church. To mark this historic occasion a publishing committee consisting of Mrs. Gudrun Skaptason, Mrs. Steinunn Kristjánsson, Mrs. Sigridur Arnason, Miss Hlaðgerður Kristjansson and Miss Margret Petursson have been responsible for the publication of a very attractive pamphlet outlining briefly the history and the main activities carried on by the organization.

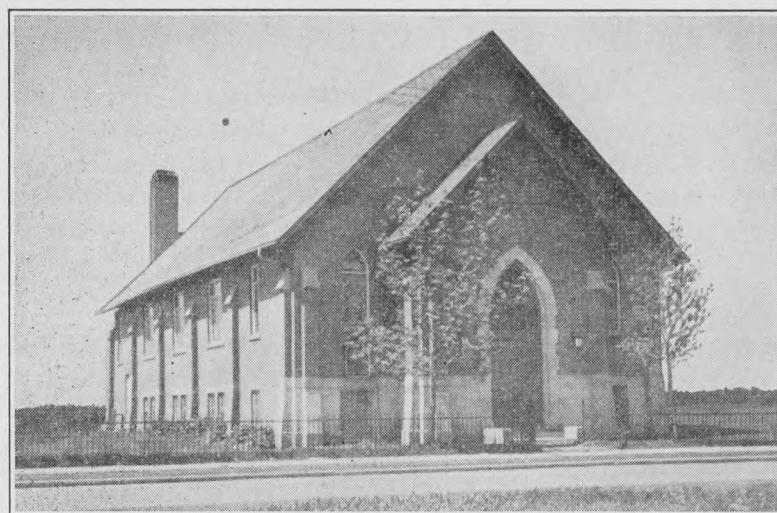
The pamphlet is thirty-two pages in size, and comprises two articles, the first in Icelandic by Gudrun Skaptason, and the other in English by Miss Margret Petursson. These articles are prefaced by some ten pages of photographs of the ministers and their wives

who have served the congregation over the past fifty years, the presidents and other officers of the Society who have given long and valuable service to the organization, the Unitarian Church on Sargent Avenue and the First Federated Church on Banning Street. An original drawing on the front cover by Miss Hlaðgerður Kristjansson, one of the charter members of the Society, adds an attractive note to the general appearance of the publication. The following article is a condensation of the historical sketch prepared by Miss Margret Petursson.

The Ladies' Aid was organized on February 1, 1904. The first meeting of the Society was held at the home of the minister and his wife, the Rev. Rögnvaldur Pétursson and Mrs. Pétursson, with twenty-one members in attendance. At this meeting by-laws



First Icelandic Unitarian Church in Winnipeg — 1904



The First Federated Church, Banning at Sargent, built in 1921.

for the organization were adopted and officers elected. Mrs. Margret Benedictson was the first president.

The Ladies' Aid began its activities in the Unitarian Church on Sherbrook Street, which was then newly erected. In order to raise funds for furnishings and equipment for the new church biulding, the members sponsored numerous activities—concerts, plays, bazaars and teas were held frequently, and for nine years, during the summer holidays, the ladies sold refreshments at the Winnipeg Industrial Exhibition. The proceeds from these projects enabled the members to furnish the church auditorium with an organ, the electrical fixtures, and also to equip the kitchen and provide tables and chairs and a piano for the concert hall.

In 1921 the members of the Unitarian Church and a group from the Tabernacle Church united to form the congregation of the present Federated Church and moved to a newly erected church building at Banning Street and Sargent Avenue. This union marked

the beginning of a new era of growth and activities for the Ladies' Aid Society with almost double its former membership.

The Ladies' Aid became affiliated with the General Alliance of Unitarian and other Liberal Christian Women in 1905. A closer contact with the central organization was established when the Ladies' Aid groups of the Federated Churches in Manitoba and in Wynyard, Saskatchewan, formed its own association in June 1926. The first director to be appointed to the Board of Directors of the General Alliance to represent the Federated Churches' women's association, was its president, Mrs S. E. Bjornsson, of Arborg, Manitoba. Mrs Bjornsson served in this capacity for a number of years.

Mrs. Margret Benedictson, champion for women's rights, enlisted the aid of other members and, as a result, the Society took an active part in the struggle to give women the right to vote.

Like most other women's auxiliary organizations, the Federated Ladies'

Aid has taken an active part in many and varied welfare projects. During the First World War they contributed handicraft articles of all kinds. At the outbreak of World War II the organization offered its services to the Red Cross. Most members faithfully fulfilled monthly quotas of work for the Red Cross, and also looked after pro-

The Society has held membership in the Women's International Council for Peace and Freedom, and the Local Council of Women. It has contributed to the work of community organizations such as the Good Neighbors' Club and the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. A standing committee of the Society visits the sick



Margret Benedictson

Elected as President at the first meeting of the Ladies' Aid Society in 1904.

viding comforts to members of their congregation serving overseas.

One of the most important large scale undertakings of the Ladies' Aid has been its contribution to the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada, whose primary function is to assist war refugees. Over 160,000 pounds of clothing have been collected and sent to war ravaged countries in Europe and Asia, most of which was parcelled at the Federated Church by members of the Ladies' Aid and other members of the congregation. The Ladies' Aid has also donated money to the Foster Parent Plan, and provided toilet kits and other necessities to war victims of Europe and Asia.



Gudrun Eyrikson

Present day President of the Ladies' Aid Society, elected in 1952.

and looks after sending them books and magazines.

One of the most fruitful ventures in which the Ladies' Aid has taken part was to work for the establishment of a summer camp for children at Hnausa, Manitoba, on the west shore of Lake Winnipeg, eighty miles north of Winnipeg. This project which was sponsored by the Women's Alliance of the Federated Churches, was started during the depression as a means of providing a summer vacation to children whose parents or guardians could ill-afford the cost of an outdoor va-

cation for them away from home. It was an enterprise which was to merit the support of a large number of interested individuals and organizations. Their generosity, in terms of cash donations and food supplies received, made it possible, with the assistance of volunteer workers, to maintain and operate the camp at little or no cost to its young charges.

During the year 1952 one of the main projects undertaken by the Ladies' Aid was to renovate and refurnish the minister's study as a memorial to the late Dr. Rögnvaldur Pétursson, as organizer and for many years the leader of The Unitarian Church movement among the Icelanders in Manitoba.

There are a number of the charter members still active in the society: — Mrs. Holmfridur Petursson, Mrs. Sigridur Arnason, Miss Hladgerdur Kristjansson, Mrs. Ragnheidur Davidson and Miss Elin Hall. The oldest charter

member of the society, Mrs. Gudrun Fridriksdóttir, passed away in 1930. She will always be fondly remembered by her associates, for she was the driving spirit amongst the group during its formative years, ever resourceful and ready to give assistance in any undertaking, however great or small, that might be of service to the church she loved. The same may well be said of all the members of the group, who met the first day of February, 1904, for the purpose of forming a society wherein they could work together for the welfare of the church.

The Icelandic Canadian wishes to take this opportunity to congratulate the Federated Ladies' Aid on having passed their fiftieth anniversary of useful and worthwhile community endeavors, and the Publishing Committee for the initiative taken in preserving for posterity the brief historical sketch of its activities.

J. Laxdal

A DISTINGUISHED SCHOLASTIC CAREER

Although only twenty-five years of age, **Robert A. Cruickshank** can look back upon a distinguished scholastic career.

After graduating from the Lynden (Washington) High School, Robert attended the Western College of Education, Bellingham. The next three years he attended the University of Washington, Seattle, specializing in Chemistry. He graduated with Honours and won two scholarships; one awarded by the Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts and the National Science Foundation Fellowship" which enabled him to do post-graduate work in Organic Chemistry for two years.

In December, 1954 he obtained his Ph.D. in Chemistry and Biology.

His father is of Scottish descent. His mother Theodora, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Eiríkur Anderson who for many years were residents of Point Roberts, Washington.

Arnold Bruce Bjornson who in 1954 was awarded the University of Manitoba Gold Medal, was last March awarded the Athlone Scholarship which covers two years study of soil mechanics in a University in England, beginning next September. This scholarship covers all expenses from the time he leaves Canada until he returns. He is the son of Árni, and his wife Pearl, Bjornson, at 853 Sherburn St., Winnipeg. (See The Icelandic Canadian, Summer Issue 1954).

Two Icelandic Settlements

by JOHN B. MEYER

(Continued from Spring issue, 1955)

Everything the farmer produced during the early period of the settlement yielded very little in return on account of the very low market value: "wheat was from 30 to 50 cents a bushel, the best beef on the hoof 2 to 3 cents a pound. The wheat crop was often lost through frost during the first years."²⁴ Not to be overlooked is the fact that in this settlement in North Dakota, the pioneers were attempting a form of agriculture with which they were not accustomed. In Iceland very little grain had been grown, and the farms were not as large and complex. The Icelandic Americans did, however, rapidly gain a reputation for being very successful in raising livestock. Cattle and sheep were soon found on every farm,²⁵ since this was the type of agriculture known in Iceland for over a thousand years.

The completion of the railroad through the settlement in 1905 brought a wave of prosperity to the Icelanders. Previous to that date the nearest terminus was twenty miles away. Many new homes were built; forest belts were cleared and wheat sowed; "everything produced was increasing in value, and the average farm was 320 acres. It was common for a farmer to have as many as 100 head of cattle."²⁶ By 1920 "the average holdings of the farmers in the Icelandic settlements after debts were deducted were from \$15,000 to \$20,000."²⁷

Recently another crop common to

the farmers of Iceland has been grown with success. Growing potatoes on a large scale has gained preeminence in the last few years. "A number of American Icelanders have gained notable success in that line. They have constructed large potato houses in various parts of the settlement with a capacity of around 80,000 bushels each."²⁸

The first social agency to function in the Pembina settlement was the church, with Rev. Pall Thorlaksson at its head. Upon his death in 1882, his successor, Rev. Hans Thorgrimson, took the initial steps in the organization of the Icelandic Lutheran Synod,²⁹ mentioned previously in conjunction with the New Iceland settlement. Several religious organizations were introduced within the church which have tended to hold the people of Icelandic origin together as a group. Also the language aided in this respect. For many years the entire service was conducted in Icelandic, but about the turn of the century, English began more and more to replace Icelandic in church services, Sunday school, and other activities. Now church services are about 25% in Icelandic and 75% in English.³⁰

Schools were in operation at the end of the third year of the settlement's existence. At first instruction was given in private homes,³¹ but as the pioneers progressed, they built schools in each of the towns. Most of the teachers in the Pembina settlement

24. T. Walters, *op. cit.* p. 70.

25. *ibid.* p. 71.

26. *Social Forces*, *op. cit.* pp. 358-59.

27. T. Walters, *op. cit.* p. 178.

28. *ibid.* p. 180.

29. *ibid.* p. 90.

30. *ibid.* p. 183.

31. *Social Forces*, *op. cit.* p. 357.

have been of Icelandic parentage who graduated from the University of North Dakota or the State Agricultural College.³² A society of Icelandic students was organized about 1900 at the University of North Dakota with the objective of serving as a "medium to assist students of Icelandic extraction who came from the isolated farms, helping them to become better adjusted to the demands of college life, to encourage and publicize higher education throughout the Icelandic communities, as well as to call attention of Americans of non-Icelandic extraction to Icelandic culture."³³

By 1880 the Icelanders began taking out their first papers toward American citizenship. Their attitude toward being a part of this country has been summed up by the late Sveinbjörn Johnson of the University of Illinois

Law School. "No spirit of clannishness or isolation is discernable in the attitude of Icelanders toward public affairs. They have formed no associations, which, whatever their ostensible object, must from their very nature tend to segregate and individualize the interest of their nationality. The general idea seems to predominate that first and last they are American citizens. They have been loyal and law abiding in the past and whatever crises our country may come to in the future they will not prove recreant to the duties owing to the flag. While all respectable Icelanders take an honest pride in the island of their birth and where their ancestors peacefully repose, they do not forget that they owe primary obligations to their adopted country which they neither attempt nor desire to evade."³⁴

32. T. Walters, *op. cit.* pp. 105-115.

33. *ibid.* p. 115

34. **History of the Red River Valley**, *op. cit.* p. 257-58.

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Pembina Settlement

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A BRILLIANT FAMILY



Eldon Arthur Johnson



Vivienne Bertha (Johnson) Halpenny

Eldon was born at Kindersley, Saskatchewan, October 18, 1918. He went to Public School at Beadle, taking Grades IX and X by correspondence. He entered the University of Saskatchewan in 1938 and obtained his Bachelor of Science degree (Agricultural Engineering) in 1943. The same year he joined RCEME. He served in England and on the continent and returned home in 1946. He is now a captain in the reserve army.

He farms at Beadle in the summer and lectures in Agricultural English at the University of Saskatchewan in the winter.

He married Charlotte Heinrich. They have one daughter, Lorna Jane.

Vivienne was born on January 18, 1922. She attended Beadle School, taking Grades IX and X by correspondence, and Grades XI and XII at McKenzie High School, Kindersley. In 1940 she went to Brandon to take her nurse's training. In 1941 she got

first prize in Pediatrics. In 1942 she won first prize for highest standing in her class. Upon her graduation in 1943 she won the Gold Medal for highest standing in her class.

She married shortly after graduation to Eric Lorne Halpenny. They now live in Kindersley where Eric runs a machine business. They have two children.

Merwyn was born at Kindersley, May 9, 1923. He went to Beadle School taking Grades IX and X by correspondence. In 1939 he was Senior Stick at McKenzie High School, Kindersley. He obtained his B.S.A. from the University of Saskatchewan in 1944.

He helped win the McGowan debating cup in 1943, and won the Van Vliet and Rayner public speaking trophies. His activities at the University of Saskatchewan included boxing, wrestling, and curling. He was a block "S" man.

Merwyn joined the R.C.A. in 1944.



W. Merwyn Johnson



Betty Arlene Johnson

He was discharged with the rank of Lieutenant in 1945. He re-entered the University of Saskatchewan that fall and obtained his B.A. degree in 1946.

He married Elaine Aseltine of Rose-town in 1946. They have three children: Merlaine, 5; Morley, 3; Gordon, 2.

He took over a part of his father's farm at Beadle where the family now resides. On August 10, 1953, he was elected C.C.F. M.L.A. for the district.

Ölöf Pálsdóttir of Iceland is studying sculpture at the School of Arts in Denmark. She was recently awarded a Gold Medal, and a tuition fund of 3000 krónur, for a statue which she named "A Son".

Betty was born at Beadle, Sask., on March 22, 1933. She attended public school at Beadle and took her high school work at Kindersley, graduating in 1951. She took her nurse's training at the Calgary General Hospital, graduating in 1954 with distinction. Betty plays the piano, has taken figure skating and swimming lessons. While in school she took an active part in dramatics.

She has been on the staff of the Calgary General Hospital since graduation.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The father of this family is Robert Arthur Johnson, Irish by birth. He came to this country at the age of 10. Mrs. Johnson's maiden name was Guðbjörg (Thorðardóttir) Kolbinson, always called Bertha Kolbinson. She taught school for five years before she was married.

Irish and Icelandic make quite a mixture!
A. V.

MRS. DANIELSON INVITED TO UTAH CELEBRATION



Mrs. H. F. Danielson

Winnipeg people in general, and Icelandic folk in particular, can take pride in the fact that Mrs. H. F. Danielson, of 869 Garfield street, has written a historical pageant for the centenary celebration in Spanish Fork, Utah, to commemorate the arrival of the first Icelandic immigrants in the United States. The celebration will be held June 15, 16 and 17, but Mrs. Danielson left June 1st to act as advisor on the production of the pageant.

She tells me that the pageant will be featured by appropriate scenery, music and costumes, and will portray the migration of Icelandic settlers to America, bringing with them their culture, traditions and skills to their adopted country while retaining a

deep reverence for the literary heritage Iceland has given the world.

A member of the Manitoba Drama League, Mrs. Danielson has been active in drama circles for a number of years, both as director and actress. She directed and took the major role in the play from Arborg, Man., which won the top award in the first Manitoba Drama festival. In 1953 she was awarded the league scholarship for the six-weeks' course in drama at the Banff school of fine arts.

She has given radio talks and directed youth groups in drama and choral work in various parts of Manitoba and in the Icelandic community of North Dakota. She was editor of the Icelandic Canadian magazine for seven years and organized and directed the Icelandic Canadian Evening School, in Winnipeg, for the study of the literature and language. The first year's series of lectures given at the school were published in a book, Iceland's Thousand Years, which has been sold to universities and cultural organizations all over the world.

This versatile Winnipeg lady also conducted drama and choral groups for the Dominion Provincial Youth training schools in 1937 and 1938 and prepared a pamphlet on drama study which was mimeographed and used in these schools in various parts of Canada.

She has written and produced short sketches, pageants and a two-act play

which was performed in Arborg, Gimli and Winnipeg. She wrote and produced the pageant, The Symbol of Iceland, which was performed at the three-day folk festival sponsored by the YMCA at the centenary in 1951. The same pageant has been performed in aid of the foundation fund for the

Icelandic Chair at the University of Manitoba. It has been recorded in colored film strips, with the music and commentary on an accompanying tape record, for preservation in the Icelandic archives of the university.

—Frank Morriss
in the Wpg. Free Press

Young Pianist

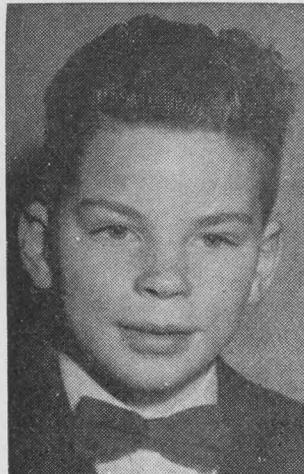


Thelma Kerrine Wilson

—Courtesy Winnipeg Tribune

Thelma Kerrine Wilson, eight, winner of the Grade 2 class at the festival, is the daughter of Mr and Mrs. (nee Thelma Guttormsson) J. Kerr Wilson, of 356 Kingston Crescent.

Family Tradition



Carlisle Wilson

—Courtesy Winnipeg Free Press.

Carlisle Wilson, 10, 356 Kingston Crescent, St. Vital, wasn't going to let his sister get ahead of him so he topped the Violin grade two solo class Saturday morning at the festival with an 83. His sister Kerrine set the standard by winning the piano solo, grade two.

★

Gloria Solvason won second place in the Grade two violin solo at the recent Winnipeg Musical Festival. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Stefan Solvason, 686 Mulvey Ave., Winnipeg.

**SUBSCRIBE TO THE
ICELANDIC CANADIAN**

GRADUATES — U. of M.

MASTER OF EDUCATION



Terry Angantyr Arnason, B.A.,
M.A., B.Ed.

DOCTOR OF MEDICINE

Norman Murray Helgason. Parents:
Mr. and Mrs. Helgi J. Helgason,
D'Arcy, Sask.

John Ivan Blair Antonius. Parents:
Mr. and Mrs. Stigur Antonius, Baldur,
Manitoba.

William Christie Meredith. Parents:
Mr. and Mrs. Meredith, Glenboro,
Man. Grandparents: Mr. and Mrs.
Stefan Christie, Glenboro, Man.

Harold Alfred Swanson.

BACHELOR OF EDUCATION

Margaret Sigridur Anderson, Sel-

kirk, Sister of Prof. O. T. Anderson,
Dean of the Faculty of Arts, United
College, Winnipeg.

Mrs. Johanna Gudrun Wilson. Par-
ents: the late Mr. J. B. Skaptason and
Mrs. Skaptason, Winnipeg, Man.

BACHELOR OF PEDAGOGY



Andrea Kathleen Sigurjonsson. Par-
ents: Mr. and Mrs. J. Edvald Sigurjons-
son, Welwood, Man. Winner of the
Fletcher Gold Medal.

Dorothy Merle Kristjanson. Parents:
Mr. and Mrs. W. Kristjanson, Win-
nipeg.

Gudmundur Kristjan Breckman.
Son of Gudmundur Breckman, Oak
Point, Manitoba.

Olafur Allen Olson, B.A.

BACHELOR OF COMMERCE
(Honors Course)



Kenneth Thor Clark. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Harry Clark, Winnipeg. — Winner of the University Gold Medal.

**BACHELOR OF SCIENCE
IN ENGINEERING**

Richard David Vopni (Civil Eng.). Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Edward Vopni, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Irvin Hjalmar Olafson (Mech Eng.). Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Oddur K. Olafson, Riverton, Manitoba

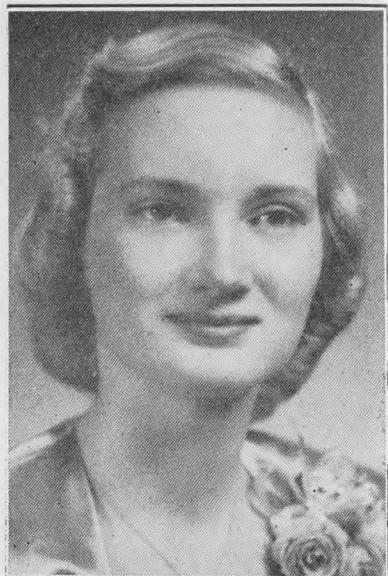
Paul Michael Schioler. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. K. B. Schioler, 167 Lyle St., St. James, Manitoba. Maternal grandfather, the late Valdimar Magnuson, one time printer at Columbia Press.

**BACHELOR OF SCIENCE
IN HOME ECONOMICS**

Dorothy Joan Johnson. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. S. E. Sigurdson, Winnipeg.

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Wallace Martin Bergman. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. G. F. Bergman, Winnipeg, Man.



Lilja Maria Eylands. Parents: Dr. and Mrs. V. J. Eylands, Winnipeg. Miss Eylands was also awarded a \$750 Icelandic Government scholarship for study at the University of Iceland, Reykjavík, during coming academic season. She'll be studying Icelandic language and literature.

Alvin Kristjan Sigurdsson, Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Kristjan B. Sigurdsson, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Jon Frederick Page Sigurdson. Parents: Dr. and Mrs. Larus Sigurdson, Winnipeg, Manitoba

Sveinn Albert Thorvaldson. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. T. R. Thorvaldson, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Marion Eileen Martin, daughter of Mrs. Margret and the late George Martin. Maternal grandfather, the late Johannes Einarson, of Calder, Eask.

**BACHELOR OF SCIENCE
IN PHARMACY**



Allan August Beck, Parents: Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Beck, Winnipeg, Man.

John David Thompson. Parents: Dr. and Mrs. Steinn Thompson, Riverton, Manitoba.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

Arni Thordur Laxdal. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Thordur Laxdal, Arcola, Sask.

Leonard Gudni Sigurdson. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Gudni Sigurdson, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Robert Kenneth Thompson. Parents: Dr. and Mrs. Steinn Thompson, Riverton, Manitoba.

BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK

Joyce Asta Johnson, B.A. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Jon G. Johnson, Regina, Sask.

DIPLOMA IN AGRICULTURE
Johann Sigurjon Johnson

DIPLOMA IN DAIRYING

Sigurdur Vidal

LAW, Third Year

Petur Thor Guttormsson

John Calvin Bjornson

★

G R A D U A T E S

(University of British Columbia)

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Rosmary Selma Alden

Johann Erickson

Mrs. Asta Lingholt

Norma Laurian Thorne

CHEMICAL ENGINEERING

Victor Leo Isfeld

BACHELOR OF LAWS

Clive Victor Nylander, B.A.

★

G R A D U A T E S

(University of Saskatchewan)

BACHELOR OF ARTS

Morley Edward Arnason, Regina.

John William Grimson, B.ED., — Estevan, Saskatchewan.

**HOSPITAL LABORATORY
TECHNICIAN**

Louise Anna Torfason, Wadena, Saskatchewan.

ASSOCIATE IN ARTS

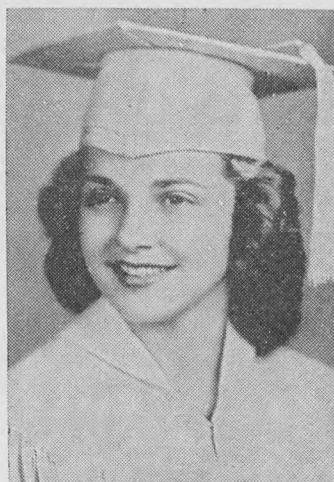
(Second Year — Regina College)

Fjola Margaret Johnson, Regina.

Donald Gene Olafson, Windthorst.

MEDICINE

Patricia Carmelle Thorfinnson, B.A.
Wynyard, Saskatchewan.

**EX-WINNIPEG GIRL
AWARDED U.S. SCHOLARSHIP****Dolores Johnson**

Dolores Johnson, grand-daughter of the late Alex Johnson, former Winnipeg grain broker, and Mrs. Johnson, formerly of Acadamy Road, has been awarded a four-year scholarship to Dominican College, Rancine, Wis., for the highest scholastic rating at St. Clement High school, Center Line, Wis.

Miss Johnson was born in Winnipeg and lived here until she was four.

She attended St. Clement high school for 12 years, and was awarded an honor certificate for being the outstanding girl leader of her class. She also received a medal for highest rating in commercial subjects and was valedictorian for the class of '54 in June.

At 16 she received her license of cosmetology from the East Side College of Beauty Culture.

Miss Johnson will major in teachers' training at Dominican College.

Her grandmother, Mrs. Alex Johnson, and her uncle, Trevor Johnson, both of Winnipeg, attended her graduation in June. —Winnipeg Free Press

**GRADUATES WITH
HIGH HONORS****Ruth Halldora Halvorson**

Ruth Halldora Halvorson, who recently graduated from the School of Nursing Regina General Hospital, Regina, Sask., won two of the major awards. She was presented the Dr. David Low Memorial medal for General Proficiency and the Pediatrics nursing prize, donated by the Alexandra Club. The first award was given for the highest average in theory and ward efficiency during the three-year training term and was presented by Mayor L. H. Hammond. It was the 51st time this award has been given. Mrs. S. E. Levitt presented the pediatric award.

Ruth Halldora is born and raised in Regina, Sask. She is the daughter of Mrs. H. T. Halvorson and late Mr. Halvorson. She attended public and high schools in Regina. When she graduated from the Central Collegiate, Regina, she won the Student's Council Award. Her mother is the former Jóna Jónasson, formerly of Selkirk, Manitoba, her father was of Norewgian descent, at one time a member of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. He passed away in 1943. Her grandparents were Bjarni Jónasson and his wife Thórunn, pioneers of the Hallson, N. Dak., district, and later at Selkirk, Man. Her aunt (móðursystir) is Fröken Halldóra Bjarnadóttir of Akureyri, whom she is named for. (See Icelandic Canadian Vol. 9, No. 4, page 44.)

OTTAWA TRIP



Valdine Elizabeth Stephanson
—Courtesy Winnipeg Tribune

Valdine Stephanson has been named as student from Selkirk collegiate to participate in Rotary's 1955 Adventure in Citizenship project. For several years Selkirk Rotary has sponsored a trip to Ottawa for one local student in conjunction with the Ottawa Rotary Club. The project is designed to stimulate interest among young citizens in the government of Canada. Miss Stephanson left for the east May 14.

Miss Stephanson, a grade 12 student is 17. Her father is Sigurbjorn (Barney) Stephanson, Supervisor of Commercial

Fisheries for the Province of Manitoba. Her mother is Hazel Elizabeth (Rowley) Stephanson.

WINS GOVERNOR GENERAL'S MEDAL

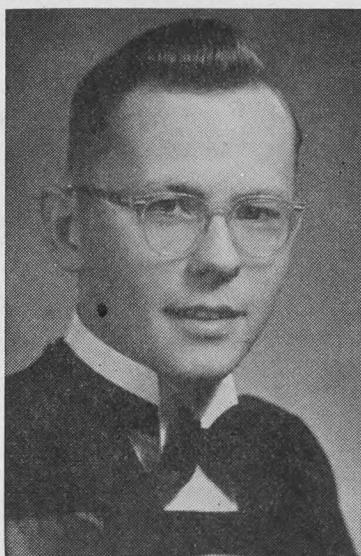


Eric George Clemens

Eric George Clemens, age 16, won the Governor General's medal awarded at the Viscount Alexander Collegiate, Fort Garry, Man, for grade XI. He was the President of the High School Council. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Clemens of 942 North Drive, Fort Garry. His mother was formerly Mabel Reykdal of Arborg, Man. She was awarded the Governor General's medal for grade XI at the Tuelon High School in 1926.

TEACHING AND SUPERVISION IN SCHOOL OF NURSING

Freeda Florence Easy, daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Harry Easy, of Westminster, B. C. Granddaughter of Hinrik and Oddný Johnson, pioneers of Lundar, Man.

SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

Donald Hugh Shields

Donald Hugh Shields graduated in Civil Engineering from the University of Saskatchewan magna cum laude. He won the Athlone Fellowship which entitles him to do two years of post-graduate work at Imperial College, London, England. He will specialize in Soil Mechanics. He also was awarded the Canadian Construction Association Prize. Last year he was awarded the Land Surveyor's prize and the California Standard Oil Co. scholarship.

Donald was born in St. Boniface, September 2nd, 1934. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Shields reside in Rainy River, Ontario. His mother's (Agnes) parents were Daniel and Thora Petursson.

GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

I think the most commendable line of endeavour a man can follow is the medical profession. A doctor ushers us into this world, strives for three score years and ten to keep us here, and when finally his efforts are no longer effective, he performs the autopsy and leaves us to the belated ministerings of the preacher. Some of them perform these services for pure love of the human race, accepting little or no reward for their efforts other than the satisfaction derived from a job well done. Such a one is Sigurður Júlíus Jóhannesson, whose golden wedding April 2nd, marked a milestone in a lifetime devoted to the service of humanity. There are many memorable dates in Sigurdur's diary, but no doubt the most cherished one is April 2, 1905, the day on which Halldora Fjelsted became his bride.

Much has been written about Sigurdur's selfless devotion to the cause of healing, but little enough has been

said about the part played in it by his wife, who stood beside him and tried to keep the budget balanced. Without her, our Icelandic community might have lost him long ago, and we could ill afford it. Somebody had to be practical, and Sigurdur was far too busy.

Sigurdur and Halldora have been with us a long time, but those years have taken their toll and prevented our community from making their anniversary the gala occasion we might have liked it to be. They spent the day quietly in their home, visited by their two daughters, Malfridur and Svanhvit, and by a number of close friends. During the afternoon, visitors dropped in, paid their respects, and left to make room for more, hoping that this brief encounter and warm handclasp expressed some small measure of the affection felt for one of our community's most widely loved couples.

A.M.R.

**HEADS A CANADIAN COUNCIL
OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES**



W. Kristjanson

Mr. W. Kristjanson, of Winnipeg, was elected President of the Canadian Council of Provincial Government Employee Association, at the close of a three day conference held at Windsor, Ontario, June 6-8.

Six provincial associations were represented, including British Columbia, Alta., Sask., Man., Ontario, and Quebec, with a total of some 60,000 government employees as members.

Mr. Kristjanson is immediate Past President of the Manitoba Government Employees' Association, which has a membership of over 3,500.

**THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN
CLUB ANNUAL REPORT**

The annual meeting of the Icelandic Canadian Club was held in the First Federated church on June 6th. The following is a brief report on some of the main events.

The Icelandic Canadian Club, jointly with the Icelandic National League and the Lief Eriksson Club sponsored

a social gathering on November 1st., at Clifton School. This was a reception for new students and young people who had come to Winnipeg to attend the University or some other seat of learning, or to seek employment. The reception was well attended, and many of the young people joined the Leif Eriksson Club. Two films were shown, one Canadian, and one from Iceland.

The Professors of Icelandic extraction at the University of Manitoba were the guests of the Club at the December meeting, which was addressed by Dr. Thorvaldur Johnson, who spoke on rust infestation of grain.

The annual banquet and dance at the Marlborough Hotel in January was a decided success. All present were inspired by the address of Rev. Stefan Guttormsson.

The annual concert held in the First Lutheran Church in conjunction with the convention of the Icelandic National League was well attended. The speaker was Judge Asmundur Benson, of North Dakota, who spoke on some aspects of American Foreign Policy.

The March meeting was a social event under the direction of the Social Convenor, Mrs. Axel Vopnfjord.

The April meeting was well attended. There were two main items: Anna Cheng, the charming Chinese soprano, and winner of the 1955 Rose Bowl, sang to the delight of the audience, and Rev. P. M. Petursson spoke on the Universal Threat of Nuclear Tests.

The following is the President's report:

"Three years ago I accepted the Presidency of the Icelandic Canadian Club in the hope that I might be of some assistance to the Club in reaching out into the wider Icelandic Canadian field. In that effort I have had the loyal and undivided support of the

Club membership and the executive committee. To them goes the main credit for what has been accomplished.

During those three years the Leif Eriksson Club came into existence and at the present time is a wide awake organization of the young people. The initial gathering which gave rise to the formation of that club paved the way to what has become a fixed institution—the welcome in the fall of young people who are entering the University and other places of learning for the first time. The welcome is now the joint sponsorship of the Icelandic National League, The Icelandic Canadian Club and the Leif Eriksson Club.

Last fall the professors of Icelandic extraction at the University of Manitoba were the special guests of the Club, at a meeting addressed by one of their number, Dr. Thorvaldur Johnson. With the exception of two or three Doctors whose professional duties made it impossible for them to attend, and one Professor who was ill, all those invited were at the meeting. This will undoubtedly be made an annual event.

Members of "Fron", a chapter of The Icelandic National League, were invited to be the guests of the Club at the April meeting. The number who attended, including the President, Jon Jonsson, was very encouraging.

A policy has been laid down of reaching out to eminent Canadians and Americans and asking them to address the Club at either the Banquet and Dance in January, or the Annual Concert in February. During the last three years the following have addressed one or the other of these public functions: Byron I. Johnson of Victoria, former Premier of British Columbia; Judge Asmundur Benson, of the District Court of North Dakota;

Rev. Harold Sigmar, formerly of Seattle, Washington, and now of Gimli, Man.; Rev. Robert Jack, formerly of Iceland, though of Scottish birth, and now of Arborg, Man.; Rev. Stefan Guttormsson, of Cavalier, North Dakota.

The Club believes that when distinguished visitors from Iceland visit Winnipeg, efforts should be made to reach them, in order that an opportunity be provided for an exchange of ideas and opinions. In that category can be placed Rev. Einar Sturlaugson, Arni Eylands, and last, though by no means least, Mayor and Mrs. Gunnar Thoroddsen of Reykjavik.

As I leave may I take this opportunity of expressing to the Executive Committee and to the members of the Club my heartfelt appreciation of the support they have given me during the last three years."

Signed, **W. J. Lindal.**

The report of the Treasurer, H. J. Stefansson, read by Jon Laxdal, showed a small operating loss for the year. Cash on hand at the end of the year was \$611.78.

The chairman of the Activities Committee reported that the Square Dance Group had met six times, the Conversation Group four times, and the Reading Group only twice. The Committee recommended that their activities be continued next year.

H. F. Danielson, the Business and Circulation Manager of the Magazine Committee reported a balance in the bank and on hand of \$1964.23. Total receipts exceeded expenditures.

The report of the membership Committee showed a slight decrease in members.

The report of the Social Committee showed expenses for the year to be \$5.50.

A vote of thanks to retiring officers of the Club and members of the Magazine Committee was passed by a hearty clap of hands.

A tribute to the late Honorary President Professor Skuli Johnson, was paid by all standing in silence, and the secretary was instructed to send a letter of sympathy to the family.

The following is the slate of officers for the coming year. President: J. T. Beck, Vice President, H. J. Stefansson, Treasurer, Helgi Olsen, Secretary, Sandra Samson, Corresponding Secretary, Steinunn Bjarnason. Executive committee: Miss Lalla Eydal, Mrs. Ingibjorg Cross, Mr. H. V. Larusson, Mr. Wm. Johnson, Mr. Art Swainson. The convenors of the various committee will be elected in the coming year.

Personnel of the Magazine Committee: Judge W. J. Lindal, Chairman of the Editorial Board and Magazine committee, Miss Mattie Halldorson,

secretary; other members of the editorial board: Axel Vopnfjord, Jon K. Laxdal, Dr. Áskell Löve, Dr. I Gilbert Arnason, Wilhelm Kristjanson, Aurelius Isfeld. News Editors: Mrs. Ingibjorg Jonsson, Arthur Reykdal, Thorsteinn Thorsteinson. Leif Eiriksson Club: to be appointed by the Club. Business and Circulation Manager: Hjalmar F. Danielson.

Sandra Samson, Secretary

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